

June 4, 2007

The Honorable Kevin J. Martin
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street SW
Washington, DC 20554

RE: PS Docket No. 07-8; CC Docket No. 94-102; WT Docket Nos. 03-264; 06-150,
06-169 and 96-86; EB Docket No. 06-119.

Dear Chairman Martin:

The Hawaii Firefighters Association (HFFA) represents the men and women in the fire departments of the State and Counties. Our members are always on the job, there to protect lives and property. Similarly, we must have a communications system that is always “on the job”, there, to enable our response as we protect lives and property. For too long, as a nation, we have allowed our first responders to rely on outdated technology with which to communicate. One needs to look no further than the tragic events of 9/11 or the aftermath of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita to see that, when it comes to communications, public safety has been left behind. We cannot nor should not allow this to continue. The time has come to provide Public Safety with the same communications tools available to commercial customers today. Lives depend on it.

On behalf of the members of the HFFA, we ask for your support for a National Public Safety Broadband Network. With the upcoming 700 MHz auction, our nation has a unique opportunity to use a contiguous block of frequencies in the upper 700 MHz band to provide public safety with an advanced, nationwide communications network while harnessing the economic benefits of a shared public/private partnership with commercial wireless operators. Most important, for the first time, first responders will be in control of our communications network that will put us permanently where we belong — at the forefront of telecommunications innovation. America’s first responders and others directly involved with protecting our homeland deserve nothing less as lives will depend on it.

The HFFA joins our fellow professional fire fighters associations taking issue with those who would place commercial interests before the interests of public safety. The auction of the 700 MHz spectrum block is public safety’s last, best opportunity to achieve both operable and interoperable communications. We do not have sufficient spectrum and we do not have operable communications, let alone interoperable communications. As a nation we have stood by for far too long as our communications system time and again failed our nation’s first responders. The time has come to do what is right for public safety. Those who would rather keep the entire 700 MHz block for their own corporate interests are not focused on doing what is right for public safety.

The HFFA respectfully requests the FCC:

- License public safety’s spectrum to a stand alone entity consisting of public safety leaders who will control the network and ensure it will be built to the standards of

reliability and redundancy that public safety requires while also ensuring that the needs of local and regional stakeholders are understood;

- Create and auction a 10MHz or larger “E Block” of the 700MHz band;
- Require the winner of the auction of this E Block to have a binding agreement with public safety for its participation in the National Public Safety Broadband Network *before* receiving their license;
- Support a public/private partnership and provide public safety with the ability to build-out in rural and underserved areas;
- Ensure that public safety in charge of the National Public Safety Broadband Network and not subordinate to the E Block auction winner as well as ensure that the National Public Safety Broadband Network stays competitive on the commercial side bringing the highest level of technology to public safety users;
- Ensure access to a satellite overlay to extend the reach of public safety’s network;

Please enable our response by providing us with the means necessary to build a truly nationwide public safety wireless broadband network.

Sincerely,

Robert H. Lee, President
Hawaii Fire Fighters Association

Copy to: The Honorable Daniel Inouye
 FCC Secretary Marlene H. Dortch
 The Honorable Michael J. Copps
 The Honorable Jonathan S. Adelstein
 The Honorable Deborah Tate
 The Honorable Robert M. McDowell